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SIPDIS

NEA/ARP, NEA/I, OSD-DPMO FOR LTC BILL THOMAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#)

SUBJECT: TRIPARTITE CELEBRATES IRAQI EFFORTS, REMAINS
RECOVERIES IN KUWAIT

REF: A. 2008 KUWAIT 1160

[B](#). KUWAIT 1048

[C](#). KUWAIT 972

[1](#). This is an Action Request. See Para 6.

[2](#). Summary. Ambassador led the U.S. delegation to the 32nd Tripartite Commission (TC) meeting on November 18, which though it closed only one official remains file, registered a spirit of optimism that was in stark contrast to last year's negative assessment of progress (ref A) in repatriating Gulf War dead. US-sparked Kuwaiti initiatives to recover the remains of Iraqi KIAs (ref B) coupled with determined GOI Ministry of Human Rights (MOHR) leadership and efforts were commended roundly by the delegations. Underscoring GOI support for remains recovery initiatives was the active participation in Iraqi discussions of MOHR Minister Wijdan Salem, accompanied by newly-arrived Iraqi CDA to Kuwait Dr. Ajwad Shaykh Taha. End Summary.

Recap of Highlights

[3](#). ICRC's Senior Deputy Head of Operations for the Middle East and North Africa, Eric Marclay, recapped for the 32nd Tripartite Commission (TC) November 18 the increased measures taken by the GOI in the search for the Kuwaitis still missing since 1991 and believed to be in mass graves in sites in Iraq. These measures include GOI efforts to excavate sites in Kerbala, Ramadi, and most recently Nasseriya, an August public awareness campaign, and active follow-up of eyewitness accounts. A US-sparked initiative that resulted in the November 3-4 finding of mortal remains in the Kuwaiti desert (ref B) was also extolled as one of the key factors that has led to improved dialogue and bilateral cooperation in the search for the missing. (For meeting notes, please visit <http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Tripartite> Commission for Gulf War Missing).

Kuwaiti Action Plan

[4](#). Capitalizing on the current wave of goodwill and proactivity, the GOK's National Committee for Missing and POW Affairs (NCMPA) submitted to the TC a new action plan to better shape the ongoing investigation into eyewitness accounts. In this plan, the GOK called for the GOI to provide detailed information on all 1990-91 Iraqi military and public officials who served in the chains of command of those who ordered the executions of the captured Kuwaitis. The plan also offered a Kuwaiti review of pre-2003 NCMPA files and eyewitness and survivor accounts in hopes that this research might yield useful new leads on eyewitnesses who may have been reluctant to give their accounts during the Saddam Hussain years.

¶5. Also, the USG was requested to provide details relevant to Kuwaiti executions that may appear in transcripts of the criminal proceedings against Iraqi war criminal Hassan Abdul Majeed (reportedly in USG custody). ICRC announced its intention to have new Baghdad Head of Delegation Magne Barth query Majeed in the near future about his knowledge of Kuwaiti executions and burials.

Recovering Iraqi KIAs

¶6. Action request. In what is believed to be the first official GOI call for the repatriation of Iraqi war dead, Minister Wijdan Salem requested assistance in providing information that might result in further excavations and recoveries of Iraqi missing believed to be buried in mass graves in Kuwait. ICRC officials in informal remarks to Embassy staff have indicated that they believe that the USG may have archival material which would assist with the Iraqi request. Embassy requests Department guidance on how to respond.

Next Year in Baghdad?

¶7. Elucidating renewed GOI support for the mandate, the GOI restated its standing invitation to host a TC or Technical Subcommittee (TSC) meeting in Baghdad, an offer warmly received -- in principle -- by the delegates. March 2010 was forecast as the first available opportunity for such an event. (Note: The Saudi delegation, headed by their Ambassador, was decidedly coy regarding a Baghdad venue,

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recognizing that the Kuwaitis seemed happy to host these events and that they -- the Saudis -- would follow the Kuwait lead. End note.)

CAPT Speicher File Closed

¶8. Ambassador, noting for the TC the recovery and identification of CAPT Speicher's remains over the summer, officially closed his file and extended to the TC USG gratitude for keeping the case active since 1991.

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